

**Minutes of the East Greenwich School Committee
Tuesday, December 21, 2010
Hanaford School Cafeteria
200 Middle Road
East Greenwich, RI 02818**

ANY ITEMS ON THE AGENDA MAY BE SUBJECT TO A VOTE

6:05p.m. Executive Session, Vote to go into executive session for discussion and/or action regarding those items of business exempt from open meetings under General Laws of Rhode Island 42-46-5 (a) (2) Potential Litigation-SORICO

The regular session of the East Greenwich School Committee was called to order in the Hanaford School Cafeteria at 7:02p.m. by School Committee Chair Dr. Deidre Gifford. Those in attendance were Mr. Bob Durant (left at 9:45p.m.); Mrs. Susan Records; Mrs. Mary Ellen Winters; Mr. Jack Sommer, and Mr. David Green. Superintendent Dr. Victor Mercurio, Director of Administration Mrs. Maryanne Crawford and Student Services Director Paula Dillon were also present. Mr. Martin was absent.

7:02p.m.Regular meeting

I. Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag

The meeting commenced with the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

II. Public Comments

There were no public comments.

III. Approval of Minutes

On a motion by Mr. Durant and seconded by Mrs. Winters, the regular and executive session minutes of December 7, 2010 were approved.

III. Recognitions

Cole R.I. Jr. All-State Musicians/Vocalists, Cole Boys' Soccer State Champions, and Cole American Mathematics Competition winners were recognized by the Committee.

IV. Superintendent's Report

Dr. Mercurio discussed the School Climate Summit and noted that 40 students attended the December 6, 2010 summit. The district plans to look at other districts to see what improvements they have made in regards to positive climate changes and professional development for faculty and staff. Dr. Mercurio also noted the NEASC visit will take place in April 2011 and the high school is in good shape for the visit. Dr. Mercurio also noted that interim high school principal, Mr. Militello, will be leaving East Greenwich at the semester break in January and a new interim principal will need to be hired for the remainder of the school year. Dr. Mercurio will bring forth a recommendation to the School Committee in January. Dr. Mercurio would like to begin the hiring process for a permanent principal after the December break and appoint the candidate by April or May 1, 2011 if possible with a starting date of July 1, 2011.

V. Action Items

a. Appointments

On a motion by Mr. Durant which was seconded by Mrs. Winters, the following appointments were unanimously approved by the Committee after discussion:

1. Amy Schwender-Paraprofessional, Meadowbrook –increase in position from .5 to .8FTE
2. Jennifer Murgo-American Literature Collaborative, EGHS, FTE.2, one year only

Mrs. Dillon explained the need for the increase in the paraprofessional from .5 to .8 FTE which is based on student need, consistency, and the specialized training necessary to perform the job. Mrs. Dillon also explained that the candidate appointed as the American Lit. Collaborative teacher will give up preparation time to fulfill the .2FTE position.

b. Parental leave

On a motion made by Mr. Durant and seconded by Mrs. Winters, an extension of parental leave was unanimously approved for Ellen Garcia from January 2011 to June 17, 2011 after discussion. Members questioned Mrs. Crawford regarding contractual agreements concerning parental leave in regards to salary and benefits. Mr. Green questioned the history of extensions and Mr. Durant noted there may be approximately 6-8 extensions per year which are based on contractual agreements.

c. Assignment of School Committee members to subcommittees

Dr. Gifford discussed the need for School Committee members in various subcommittees and noted there should be at least 3 School Committee members on each subcommittee. The Advisory Committees are primarily made up of community members with expertise and only 1-2 School Committee members. It was determined that Mr. Durant and Mr. Sommer will remain on the Finance Committee with Mr. Sommer now as a School Committee member. Mrs. Records will continue on the Technology Committee with Mr. Sommer as her back-up. Mrs. Winters will continue on the Buildings/Facility Committee with Mr. Green joining the committee. Mrs. Winters will also continue on the Field's Committee with Mr. Martin joining. Mrs. Records will continue on the Personnel Committee with Mr. Green and Mr. Martin joining the committee. The Policy Committee will still include Dr. Gifford and Mr. Green and Mr. Durant will join this committee. The Wellness and Mental Health committees still need School Committee chairs. Past subcommittees such as communication, facilities, and legal/legislative will only be activated on an ad-hoc basis.

d. Finance Committee Composition

Mr. Durant noted the Finance Committee met last week and is in the process of assigning members to stakeholders in the district. He would like the appropriate language changed in the Finance Committee Charge to allow "up to 7" members in the group rather than the current 5 members. On a motion by Mr. Sommer and seconded by Mr. Green, the Committee voted unanimously to recommend the Finance Committee Charge be revised from 5 members to "up to 7 members". The formal revised charge will be voted on at the January 4, 2011 meeting.

e. Finance Committee Appointment

The Finance Committee reached out to the community for 2-3 new members. Mr. Durant noted that numerous resumes were received from community members with impressive qualifications. Mr. Durant and Mr. Sommer spoke with various applicants and recommend Mrs. June Fischer and Mr. Mohan Mahadevan for the Finance Committee. On a motion by Mr. Durant and seconded by Mrs. Winters, the Committee voted unanimously to appoint Mrs. Fischer and Mr. Mahadevan to the Finance Committee. Mr. Durant also noted there may be one more slot for a community member.

f. Senior Project Presentation – release Cole and EGHS

Dr. Mercurio recommended an early release day on April 21, 2011 for Senior Project Presentation. Students from Cole and EGHS will be released from school at 10:30 a.m. to allow Cole and EGHS teachers to judge senior projects. Dr. Mercurio stated that approximately 26 panels consisting of 5 people are needed. Panels will be made up of 40 Cole teachers, 70 EGHS teachers, and 26 community members. Dr. Gifford questioned the need for an early release day noting it is difficult for students to catch up on missed work. She questioned whether Cole faculty members could participate on a rotating basis. Dr. Mercurio discussed the need for consistency in judging and the importance of having Cole and EGHS teachers judge the project. He also noted that Cole teachers have adjusted/revised certain areas of teaching in order to prepare students for Senior Project. He also noted that many districts use their entire K-12 staff to judge the panels and stated it is best to have all staff members participate. The Committee would like Dr. Mercurio to go back to the PBGR teacher and look at a different option for Senior Project for the 2011-2012 school year. On a motion by Mrs. Records and seconded by Mr. Durant, the Committee voted to approve the early release for Cole and EGHS with a 4-2 vote. Dr. Gifford and Mr. Sommer voted against the early release day.

g. Approval of Elevator Chairlift

Dr. Mercurio recommended the Committee award the bid for the Press Box Chairlift to Freedom Lifts, LLC, in the amount of \$30,931.25. This chairlift is required for ADA compliance. On a motion by Mr. Durant and seconded by Mrs. Winters, the bid was unanimously awarded.

h. Approval of Facility Use Policy for Religious Organizations

This policy had a first read in July 2010 and was tabled. Mr. Sommer questioned policy language in regards to permanent location. Dr. Gifford noted that organizations need to read the language and if there is a specific concern, it should be directed to the School Committee for clarification. On a motion by Mr. Durant and seconded by Mrs. Records, the Committee voted unanimously to approve the second read and adopt the "Use of Schools by Religious Organizations" policy.

i. Approval of Policy for Audio/Video Recordings at Meetings-First read

The need for this policy was brought to the attention of the Student Services Director at a legal conference. Mr. Durant questioned whether the district has faced a situation where this policy was needed and Mrs. Dillon noted the district has not. The second read for the policy will take place on January 4, 2011.

j. EGHS Mid-Term Exam Schedule-early release

Dr. Mercurio presented the Committee with a recommendation for early release days during EGHS mid-term exams which will run January 20, 2011-January 25, 2011. Students will be dismissed at 11:45a.m. each day during mid-terms. Dr. Mercurio noted that students have asked to continue this practice which affords them ample study time after school which eases pressure. On a motion by Mr. Durant which was seconded by Mrs. Winters, the Committee voted 6-0 to approve the early release days during mid-term exams.

k. School Committee Meeting Dates for 2011-revised dates

The School Committee Meeting Date schedule that was approved on 12/7/10 needed to be revised due to the Financial Town Meeting which takes place on June 14, 2011. The June schedule was changed to: June 7, 2011 – School Committee meeting and June 14, 2011 Financial Town meeting. The two June dates were the only revisions made.

l. SORICO Update

Dr. Mercurio asked the Committee for approval to withdraw from SORICO effective 6/30/11. The Committee asked Dr. Mercurio to change the language in his letter to Commissioner Gist to reflect the "district's right to revoke this withdrawal prior to June 30, 2011 in the event that we receive any new or additional information regarding the financial or programmatic status of SORICO." On a motion by Mrs. Records and seconded by Mrs. Winters, the Committee voted unanimously to approve the withdrawal from SORICO. Mr. Durant left at 9:45p.m. and was not included in this vote.

VI. Discussion Items

a. Building Committee-discussion of repairs and Meadowbrook floor

Mr. Jay Gowell, Chair of the Building Committee, updated the Committee on various needed repairs throughout the district. The Building Committee has studied all projects and came up with a priority list: the EGHS and Frenchtown roofs which are leaking- \$3.0 million; EGHS library which needs upgrading-\$500,000; EGHS technology upgrades - \$650,000; EGHS lighting - \$1.0 million. He also noted that closing Meadowbrook is not an option based on NESDEC demographic projections. The estimated cost to fix the flooring, roofing, and HVAC is approximately \$4.0 million (\$1 million was included in bond). He noted that Meadowbrook has been dealt with on a maintenance basis. Mr. Winikur of SBS discussed the Long Range Facilities Plan Development for East Greenwich Schools. Mr. Winikur discussed the roof issue and noted that W.P. Hickman, not SBS, provided infrared scanning of the roofs for the East Greenwich School District. Mr. Winikur gave the Committee a recommendation of roofs that need to be replaced. He noted that the EGHS and Frenchtown are the highest priority schools that need replacements first. Dr. Gifford noted that members of the Town Council were disputing the need for certain roof replacements. Mr. Wilmarth noted that his crew continuously repaints areas that leak and that there are dozens of buckets in the high school and Frenchtown during rainy days. Mr. Winikur estimates repairs to the EGHS roof to be approximately \$1,813,500 million and Frenchtown approximately \$225,000. Dr. Gifford asked the Building Committee to go through and prioritize their recommendations and report back at the January 4, 2011 meeting. After much discussion, Mr. Durant made a motion to allocate \$1,813,500 to repair the EGHS roof and \$225,000 to repair the roof at Frenchtown. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Winters and the Committee voted unanimously to approve this recommendation

which will be referred to the Town Council for approval. It was noted that these approved figures are estimates and the work will go out to bid after Town Council approval.

b. UCOA – budget vs. actual

This item was tabled until the January 4, 2011 meeting.

c. Field's Use – Memo of Understanding

Dr. Mercurio met with the Town Manager to discuss the management of the fields. The MOU is still in rough draft form and needs to be finalized. The Committee reviewed a 7 page document provided by Mr. Wilmarth which lists town maintenance jobs by facility type. There was discussion of the history as to what party (town or school) has taken care of certain maintenance issues. Dr. Gifford noted there is a lack of clarity, custody, control, and ambiguity in this list in regards to responsibility. She noted the MOU needs to clarify responsibility of Town, Athletic Director, School Committee, etc. No action was taken and this item will be discussed at the January 4, 2011 meeting.

d. Mr. Martin's report on school visitations

Mr. Martin was absent and this item will be tabled until the January 4, 2011 meeting.

e. Middle School Transition

Mrs. Meyer discussed the Cole transition process and noted Cole is in phase 2 of the process. She noted that there will be a walk through tomorrow morning at 8:30a.m. She also noted that Gilbane may take possession of the old Cole building after the new Cole opens in April. The soft opening of Cole is still scheduled for April. Mrs. Meyer is continually speaking with students and staff to prepare them for the transition and April opening. She also noted that the teams are discussing an enrichment block in the new schedule.

f. Athletic Director –Seasonal report

Mr. Cobain discussed the successful fall season at East Greenwich. He noted highlights including EG being the host site for 3 state semi-final doubleheaders, host site for Girls Soccer Injury Fund, and the Football Injury Fund. EG had 347 (46%) students participate in high school sports and 91 (22%) of Cole students participate. Mr. Cobain noted that volleyball participation scores rose to 20 students which was great for the district. He also noted that EG received 825 points in the medium school division for the RIIL Challenge Cup. Mr. Green would like Mr. Cobain's next report to include any challenges faced in regards to staff, coaches, and administration. He would like to know what needs to be worked on. Dr. Gifford would also like a report on recommendations for the fields.

VII. School Committee Concerns

Mrs. Records would like to review the Personnel Charge. Dr. Mercurio would also like to meet as a group after the December break and discuss the posting for the EGHS Principal. Dr. Gifford would like the School Committee Clerk to post the monthly Advisory and Subcommittee meeting dates on the district website. Mr. Sommer would like to explore the possibility of having a group such as the Habitat for Humanity help build the Concession Stand.

VIII. Adjournment

On a motion by Mrs. Records and seconded by Mr. Sommer, the meeting was adjourned at 10:14 p.m.

CHRISTINE DIMEGLIO
SECRETARY